

REMARKS

Restriction has been required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372, with the Office initially finding that the application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions:

Group I (claims 1-21 and 38-39), drawn to a method for removing non-condensing gas from a mixture of condensing and non-condensing gases, and condenser thereof;

Group II (claims 22-26 and 40), drawn to a process of pumping coolant through an array of parallel heat exchangers and condenser comprising an array of parallel heat exchanger conduits; and

Group III (claims 27-31 and 40), drawn to a method for minimizing the pressure within a containment vessel and containment vessel thereof.

By this response applicant elects the invention of Group I, drawn to a method for removing non-condensing gas from a mixture of condensing and non-condensing gases, and condenser thereof, with traverse as to Group III.

Claims 1-21 and 38-39 are believed to relate to the elected invention of Group I.

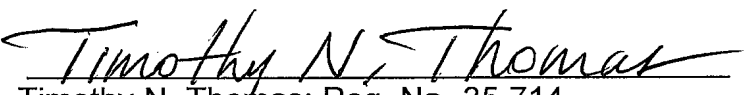
Claims 27-31 and 40 are believed to relate to an invention (Group III) that shares the same inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1, as more fully described below.

Claims 22-26 and 40 are believed to relate to a non-elected invention (Group II), and have accordingly been cancelled without prejudice to their prosecution in a related application.

More particularly addressing the inventive concepts of the groups identified by the Office, Group I (claims 1-21 and 38-39) relates to a condensing method and condenser where non-condensing gas is removed from a gas mixture. Group III (claims 27-31 and 40) relates to a condensing method and containment vessel where a released gas is retained and its pressure is reduced. It is clear from the description and claims that the inventions have a technical feature in common, namely, the feature of reducing the mass fraction of non-condensing gas in a condensing region so as to provide an improved condensing effect. This common technical is believed to satisfy the requirements of PCT rule 13.1, and for that reason the requirement that claims 27-31 and 40 must be withdrawn is traversed.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, examination of claims 1-21, 27-31, 37-38, and 41 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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